## CHURCH WEEKLY

 April 2023

## Church Weekly

Vol. 78
Issue 4
April 2023
An Eeumenical Publieation frow THE ALWAYE FELLOWSHIP HOUSE

## $77^{\text {" Yean of Publication }}$

 FOUNDER GHIEF EDITOR : Sri. N.M. ABRAHAM First Publighed: December 1946$$
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## CHURCH WEEKLY

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## ロロดக゙ロ100

## ＂Let the resurrection joy

 lift us from loneliness and weakness and despair to strength and beauty and happiness．＂Floyd W．Tomkins



## Fellowship News



## Arch Bishop Emeritus Mar Joseph Powathil (92)

The Fellowship House along with the ecumenical world mourns the departure of Powathil Thirumeni, former Arch Bishop of the Changanassery Arch Diocese of the Roman Catholic Church, who left for his heavenly abode on $18^{\text {th }}$ March 2023.


Rev. Dr. Jacob Thomas, former faculty member at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune member at Union Biblical Seminary, Pune
leading the Retreat. Secretary Kuruvilla M. George Presided.


Rev. Biju K. George, Vicar, St. Thomas Marthoma Church, Kalamassery, leading the service. Secretary Kuruvilla M. George Presided.


Sri. Joseph Thoppil (Nadam Musicals, Aluva) performing at the Fellowship House accompanied by Sri. Steffin and Sri. Jithu Chandramohan.

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# Meditations on the face of Jesus THE FACE OF DEATH 

Jesus bowed His Head and gave up the Ghost. (John 19:30)

Steadfastness and determination were the keynotes of the life of Jesus Christ. Always, at every moment of his earthly pilgrimage, the Lord kept steadfastly before Him the purpose of His Incarnation.

He knew without a shadow of doubt that He had been born into the world to do His Father's business at all costs, and followed the way set for him right to the bitter end. He steadfastly set His face to go to Jerusalem, though He knew what would happen. And what did result? He suffered most cruel and intense agony in the Garden of Gethsemane. He saw His loved apostles flee at the first sign of danger. He was betrayed with a kiss by one Apostle, denied thrice by another, tried and dishonoured by the spitting in the palace of the High Priest, examined by Pilate, mocked by the soldiers, and sent to Herod, re-examined and finally condemned to death by Pilate. Yet in silence He suffered it all, willingly giving Himself as a Lamb to the slaughter, always keeping His face set towards the Hill of Calvary and the Crucifixion. Isn't it beyond human comprehension that the Jerusalem which He loved with such a maternal affection should nail Him to a tree? But never forget that we have a share in that crucifixion.

We shall never be able to comprehend the sufferings of Jesus upon the Cross. But at length
all is over. And now behold His Sacred Body lifeless upon the Cross. His Face sunk upon His Breast. The lips that once uttered gracious words, the hands that healed, the feet that walked about doing good are still. The pain is over, gibes and insults can reach Him no longer.

Let us look at His Face as He hangs there. What do we see written thereon? Surely it is of Peace and Rest. Do you remember His last words, Father, into Thy Hands I commend My Spirit.
"Father", so spake the dying Christ, and so we may utter the same words too, as we enter the valley of the shadow of death. Jesus has removed for ever the terror of death. The word Christ uttered speaks of love and friendship. I suppose that most people dread death, because it seems to be so lonely. Thus it appears to us who are alive and well, but Jesus has removed for ever any idea of loneliness. No child who is ever born into this world of ours is really lonely. He must at least have a mother, and in most cases there are other members of the family, who are waiting to welcome the new born child. And what is life? It is but an entry into a new experience. Then we may say, what is Death? And the answer is again, an entry. So death may not be so lonely as we imagine it to be. I remember when I was a youngster being intrigued by a hymn which ran as follows:-

There are angels hovering around,
To carry the soul away.
We need not doubt that the angels were very near to the Redeemer as He wrestled with the evil one on the bitter tree. They had sung for him when he was born of Mary in the stable of Bethleham, they had ministered to him in the desert of the temptation, and they had strengthened him when he put the cup of the will of God to his lips in the garden of the agony. And when he breathed his last, after commending himself to the beloved Father, we may be sure that they were there "to carry his soul away" to the place of departed spirits. For the business which he had performed on earth for his Father and completed to the utmost must yet be made known to those "who waited for the redemption of Israel."

Jesus had been very lonely upon the Cross, for then he had been bearing the Sin of the whole world. It had brought from the Saviour's lips, "My God, my God, why didst thou forsake me." But that was past, and he died at peace with God and man. So the faithful Christian need not fear that he will be called upon to die alone. There will be the Everlasting Arms of God; there will be the companionship of the holy Angels, who will bear the soul away to the rest and peace of Paradise. Thence did the soul of the Saviour wing its flight on the evening of Good Friday, when the offering had been completed. There did he give welcome to the Penitent Thief, the first fruit of his Passion. Paradise brings before the mind the picture of beauty and innocence. The word means a garden or park, and was applied to the abode of our first parents in Eden. And Christ has revealed to his children that God has prepared a place of refreshment, light and peace for them who faithfully serve him in this life.

Saint Peter tells us what our Lord did, when his soul was parted from his body. He went down
to Hades to "preach to the spirits in prison." The proclamation of the Cross in that prison wrought the first deliverance which resulted from that Atonement.
"Prison" was changed into Paradise by the presence of Jesus. The souls of the departed had waited long, and indeed, all the saints of the old dispensation had been expectantly looking forward to the coming of the Deliverer, and on that Good Friday night, the gates of the prison-house opened to admit the soul of the redeemer. Thence their waiting-place has been the Paradise of God. So the dead face of Jesus with its look of peace, the peace which came because the Everlasting Arms of his Father had enfolded him, speaks of the bliss of paradise, where the souls of the righteous are in the hands of God, and they are at peace.

But remember "Paradise" is Paradise only when Jesus is present. It makes all the difference to our conception of the dead if we believe that Jesus has shared their experience. Let me return to something I have said before. Jesus Incarnate was a real Man. He came to this world to share every experience of mankind. So he spent the hours from the evening of Good Friday to the beginning of Easter Day in the realms of the departed, so that others might follow in faith whither he had preceded them.

Yet the souls in that state do not yet know complete happiness, for they are still waiting their final admission to the presence of God in heaven. That admission is delayed till the last trumpet shall sound, and until the last traces of $\sin$ shall be removed.

We are told that our friends in Paradise cannot be made prefect without us. It is a satisfaction for us to know that they can help us by their prayers. It is a great comfort to us that we on earth can enhance their felicity.
(Continued on page 29)








































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＂The Eucharist is not a mere teaching session for the edification of those who attend it．It is the vital link between Creation and God．It is the high－ est response of the Creation to God．．．＂












































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 カிカカカรฺ：
＂If the poison of pride is swelling up in you， turn to the Eucharist；and that Bread，which is your God humbling and disguising Himself，will teach you humility．If the fever of selfish greed rages in you，feed on this Bread；and you will learn generosity．If the cold wind of coveting withers you，hasten to the Bread of Angels；and charity will come to blossom in your heart．If you feel the itch of intemperance，nourish your－ self with the Flesh and Blood of Christ，who prac－ tised heroic self－control during His earthly life； and you wil become temperate．If you are lazy and sluggish about spiritual things，strengthen yourself with this heavenly Food；and you will grow fervent．Lastly，if you feel scorched by the fever of impurity，go to the banquet of the An－ gels；and the spotless Flesh of Christ will make you pure and chaste．＂

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## Life Style <br> Dr. Annie David <br> Humility Feigned or Real?

expect many people to agree with me if I say that feigned humility is a common irritant these days; many people have the habit of feigning humility. But, occasionally, if you see a child doing it, you are likely to feel something worse than irritation; you will feel sad that surely something was amiss in the child's upbringing. Children naturally feel happy and elated when they have done well in something at school or elsewhere; that is the most spontaneous emotion to come up in their minds on such occasions. This is expected, and there is nothing wrong if this happens. Children come home and happily announce to all at home that they achieved something; it creates a very pleasant experience for everyone at home. There is nothing more desirable than shared happiness in one's home-life. But, if a child decides to keep the information a secret from everybody outside the home, I would say that something is badly amiss in the child's upbringing.

A child's circle of love should encompass much more than the immediate family. Usually there are uncles and aunts, granduncles and grandaunts, who love the child just as much, and would take pleasure in sharing the happiness with the family. The most natural thing for the child to do would be to use the telephone to share the good news with the extended family. This is not pride, but a perfectly legitimate expansion of the circle of pleasure. As long as the child does not strut about like a proud peacock with a head held high and a nose stuck out, announcing his achievement to all and sundry, the parents need

not interfere; legitimate pleasures are a child's birth-right. Parents should develop a right understanding of what contributes to the healthy growth of their child's mind.

When children are checked at home in their enjoyment of healthy pleasures, they are likely to develop the wrong understanding that it is important for them to learn to be restrained and subdued; these are virtues to be learnt and practised with prudence and maturity. Healthy pleasures make the right contributions towards a child's spontaneous development to maturity. Parents should know when to intervene, correct and teach their children, and when to leave them alone. Never 'teach' them to be humble; they will only learn to feign humility. Real humility is noticed when a child gracefully acknowledges a recognition won and shares the happiness with all the loved ones.

It is genuine humility that enables a person to put up with the ill-treatment given and the humiliation caused by others. During the Passion Week that has just gone by, didn't we see how patiently Jesus endured all this and much more - all the suffering that culminated in His death on the Cross. The joy that ensues His resurrection on Easter Sunday is the reward for those who suffered with Him. The deeper the suffering and the fuller the joy that we experienced, the longer will the enriching experience continue to guide as through life's journey!

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# KITCHEN ${ }^{-}$ TREASURES 

## A world of 100\%

## Women and the Importance of Health



Awoman is the corner stone of a family's overall health. Her mental and physical health are of prime importance for the well-being of the family. Life in the family revolves around her.

Today woman has, no doubt, achieved equality with man in almost all spheres of life from driving heavy vehicles to climbing mountains or even going to outer space. "Hum kisi se kum nahi" - she stands shoulder to shoulder with man, venturing into the various arenas which were never dreamt of being handled by her. Kudos for that.

On the flip side, women, by nature, are more concerned about the health of her family members - her spouse, children, parents, inlaws and others, even to the extent of being over-concerned about the pets in her house. In the bargain, she ignores her own health. She does not undergo routine health checkups, small ailments are ignored or treated by self, and only when they worsen to an unmanageable situation she seeks the help of doctors.

On March 8, International Women's Day, I had the opportunity to contribute to a talk show. The theme was "Women and the Importance of Health". India now ranks 10th out of 156 nations in terms of gender disparity. This disparity is mainly in the matter of women's access to health care.

I would personally blame us women for neglecting our own health till it gets out of our
hands. There is nothing wrong in spending a few hours a day for one's own sake. It can be for personal grooming, or for prayer and meditation, or for pursuing some hobby, etc..

A woman goes through different stages of life, with associated emotional stress, like menarche, marriage, delivery, pre and post partum experiences, and menopause.

There may be negative life experiences like infertility issues, divorce, loss of a kid before or after delivery, discrimination, isolation, neglect by one's own partner... all these lead to stress related diseases.

A classic example of today's youth ignoring one's own health in the pursuit of job, deadlines and money making, is seen in the confession by the TV anchor-cum-film actress Subi Suresh, before she succumbed to death at the prime age of 41 . She entertained us through her various programs like Cinemala, Kuttipattalam etc, but her long working hours, skipping of meals, irregular sleep patterns, not having medicines on time, etc, all culminated in her collapse at this early age.

We sacrifice our health to make wealth, but later we realize that wealth cannot buy health. Health is the biggest wealth, so let us give health the first priority, everything else will follow.
> "A woman is the full circle. Within her is the power to create, nurture and transform."
> - Diana Mariechild


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Often people remember or talk about St. Thomas as 'doubting Thomas'. Was he the only one who doubted, to be called by that nick name?

When we read about the resurrection of Jesus in the Gospels, we see that there are others who doubted or didn't believe or did not understand what Jesus told them about His resurrection.
Jesus predicted His death 3 times:

1) At Caesarea Philippi Jesus told His disciples that He must go to Jerusalem and suffer many things at the hands of the elders, chief priests and teachers of the Law, and that He must be killed, and on the 3rd day be raised to life (Mt. 16:21).
2) After healing the epileptic boy He was travelling through Galilee. He told His disciples, "The Son of Man is going to be betrayed into the hands of men. They will kill him and after three days he will rise" (Mk. 9:31).
3) When Jesus decided to go to Jerusalem, He took His disciples aside and told them that

## Doubting and Believing


everything that is written by the prophets about the Son of Man would be fulfilled and He would be handed over to the Gentiles who would mock Him, insult Him, spit on Him, flog Him and kill Him, and He would rise on the third day (Lk. 18:31-33).

Everything happened as He predicted and He was crucified as the 'Lamb of God'.

Very early on the third day, i.e., first day of the week, Mary Magdalene with other women went to the tomb of Jesus with spices to anoint his body. It means that they did not grasp the fact that He would rise again - they saw the empty tomb. The angels told them that Jesus was risen. Yet Mary Magdalene was thinking that someone had carried Him away.

The women reported to the disciples about the empty tomb. Peter and John ran to the garden to check. They saw the strips of linen and the scarf. They returned. Mary stood there crying when the resurrected Jesus addressed her. She then believed.

Jesus appeared to Simon Peter; then he too believed. Two men going to Emmaus were talking about all that happened in Jerusalem during the Passover weekend. Jesus joined them as a fellow traveller but explained to them about the suffering of Messiah prophesied by the prophets and what was written in the scripture. In their house when Jesus took the bread, gave thanks, broke it and gave them, their eyes opened and they knew that it was
(Contd. on page 31)

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## Holy Qurbana

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Qurbano, the slaughter of the innocent Lamb of God!
Ultimate master plan of the Holy Trinity
Redemption through His precious blood shed on the Cross!!
Bread of Life broken into pieces for us!
Adoration and thanksgiving in ceremonial worship!!
Nevertheless sharing the Holy Flesh and Blood of Christ

## Absolute atonement and Sacrament!!!

(Continued from page 8): Meditations...
Our prayers and our praises ascend with the incense we offer in our Qurbanas and at other times, and we make good memorial for those who have passed beyond our ken.

Some day the shadows will flee away, and we shall be united with the whole company of the faithful departed, where pain and sorrow will be banished for ever in the brightness of the presence of Christ. That is guaranteed for us, because the Saviour closed his eyes in death upon the Tree of the Cross. It is that Tree of Life upon the summit of Calvary that has given to Christians the hope of happiness to come. For the Cross is also a ladder reaching from the gates of death, through the waiting-place to
the throne of God our Father. That was what Jesus accomplished by his death. He opened for all time the way to the eternal Father. Heaven is where Jesus is, so in some measure, heaven is on earth as well as in Paradise. That is what the Church understands when she says that by Baptism we are made "Inheritors of the Kingdom of heaven."

But there are greater joys to come, for now we see through a glass darkly and only know in part. But, because Jesus has tasted death for us sinners, the time will come when our earthly pilgrimage is over, and our waiting time in Paradise past, for us to see our Lord face to face and to know him as he is, to which consummation may God in his mercy bring us. Amen.


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（Continued from page 27）：Doubting．．．
Jesus．They ran back to Jerusalem to tell the disciples．

While they were talking Jesus appeared to the ten disciples，showed them his hands and ate a piece of broiled fish．Then they believed．

Thomas was not with them when Jesus appeared to the 10 disciples．So he did not believe their story．Only when Jesus appeared to him and showed him his hands and asked him to put his finger in the marks，he recognised Jesus who was resurrected．His statement＂My Lord and My God＂reveals his understanding of Jesus．He recognised Jesus not only as the
master as he had before，but as GOD．It was a profound statement．

Thomas was not the only one who disbelieved Jesus．The others also did not understand his prediction．It was never heard of before．They witnessed the raising of Jairus＇ daughter，the widow＇s son at Nain and also Lazarus．Jesus did it．But Jesus，being the Messiah himself，who raised Him？We cannot blame them for not believing it．That was a mystery！！


## Editor's Note <br> "KINGDOM OF GOD"

by

Dr. T. JACOB JOHN, VELLORE.

The enlightening series written by Dr. T. Jacob John has been concluded with Chapter 20 that appeared in the Church Weekly - 2023 March issue. The author is a renowned Virologist and former faculty member at the Christian Medical College, Vellore.

The subject 'Kingdom of God' alias 'Kingdom of Heaven' is normally poorly understood or misunderstood while its importance shall not be underestimated
or cannot be over emphasized. The clinical precision, meticulous preparation and lucid presentation of the articles are the result of dedicated study and deep meditation.

We thank Dr. T. Jacob John for his priceless contribution. We also thank our esteemed readers for the profound appreciation accorded to the series.

- Chief Editor


## Glimpses of the Kingdom of God

1. Psalm 103:19 "The Lord has established his throne in heaven; and his kingdom rules over all."
2. Mathew 5:3 "Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the Kingdom of Heaven."
3. Mathew 7:20-21 "Not everyone who saith unto me, Lord shall enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but him that doeth the will of my father which is in heaven."
4. John 3:3
"... Jesus declared "I tell you the truth, no one can see this Kingdom of God unless he is born again."

## Sadhu Sunder Singh:

"Wherever God is, there is heaven. God is present everywhere, therefore heaven is everywhere. God's true worshippers are happy everywhere, under all conditions, in pain or comfort, among friends or enemies, in this world and the world to come. They live in God, and this is the Kingdom of God."
(From the book, 'Christ in Silence', by C.F. Andrews. 1933).

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# Why Only A Donkey? 



Once again I was in the Chapel, on the day before Good Friday, after celebrating the Pesaha Perunaal. I sat looking at the Crucifix, thinking about the Hosanna day - especially, why Jesus preferred the donkey for his triumphal entry into the Temple. (Matt. 21:2) As I was thus burning my brain, I felt a cool breeze and Jesus was standing beside me.
Js: Today what is worrying you, my son?
Me : We just observed Hosanna, your triumphal entry into the Temple... But I was just wondering why my Lord selected a donkey for this journey... instead of a horse.
Js: You are right... I could have taken a horse... It would have been colourful and pompous... but then, the colour and pomp come from the horse...
$\mathrm{Me}:$ But you are the King... the three Magi asked Herod, 'where is he, born as King of the Jews'?
Js: (laughing) Yes... yes... on my cross also it was written 'Jesus, King of the Jews'...
Me:In the Temple, you had shown your authority by clearing the hoarders and merchants who had made it a den of thieves!
Js: So you want me to mount a horse or elephant rather than a poor donkey... (after a few moments of silence, Jesus continued)... Hope you remember the milestones in my life... When I was born, I selected a very simple woman to be my mother... I was born in a cattle shed and was placed in a manger... not in the palace of Herod... not even as Moses, taken to the palace of Pharaoh... When I was about to start my mission, Satan told me to jump from the top of the Temple to impress people, but I didn't... I was always with the oppressed, weak and meek... I befriended the sinners...
$\mathrm{Me}: L o r d . .$. all these are true but Hosanna is different... You were a totally different person...
Js: Hmmm... different... That is in action... If I had taken a horse, what is the difference between me and the proud? I wanted to show that a donkey, which is simple and looked down upon, can be the carrier of the King of Kings... It is not reserved for the horse... but you see the humble donkey does whatever its master wants it to do...
$\mathrm{Me}: L o r d$, this is beyond my comprehension...
Js: It is simple... Whether you are a donkey or a horse, when you are given a task, try to accomplish it... John, the Baptist, was given a mission... he did it... the apostles were assigned some duties... they did it even at the cost of their lives...
$\mathrm{Me}: L o r d$, there is one thing which other people might not have noticed, but which caught my attention...
Js: Oh, what is it?
Me:When you ordered to bring the donkey...
Js: No... No... Please don't say ordered... requested...
$\mathrm{Me}: Y e s$ Lord, when you requested to spare the donkey, there was a colt with it... and you wanted the colt also to come with the donkey... how caring my Lord was...
Js: I care for the donkey and for the colt... the lost coin and the least coin... your hunger is my hunger... that is why I resurrected and promised to be with you till the end of the world... but I want you to keep the atmosphere fit for me to remain with you... Please be in the Church to celebrate my resurrection... Keep company with the resurrected Christ,... and with the weak and the neglected. I sat gazing at the crucifix for some more time...

Printed by KURUVILLA M. GEORGE, published by KURUVILLA M. GEORGE on behalf of the Alwaye Fellowship House Association, Aluva - 683102 and printed at the Alwaye Press, Friendship House, Aluva - 683101 and published at the Alwaye Fellowship House, U.C. College P.O., Aluva - 683102 . Editor: KURUVILLA M. GEORGE


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